

REVIEWS.

INSANITY—ITS CLASSIFICATION, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT. *A Manual for Students and Practitioners of Medicine.* By E. C. Spitzka, M.D. Second edition. F. B. Treat, publisher, 771 Broadway.

The rapid exhaustion of the first edition of this work is a demonstration of the profession's recognition of the ability of the author and its desire to become acquainted with his view, which, it had every reason to suspect, would be to a great extent original. Nor can this expectation be said to be not realized by a perusal of this work, since the author's personality pervades almost every page.

In reviewing a second edition, it becomes the duty of the critic to compare it with the first. By such a comparison we cannot say that any great changes present themselves in this manual, excepting the correction of a few typographical errors; the modification of the tone of the foot-notes, which in the first edition, although they may have expressed the author's true sentiments, ought to have been nevertheless foreign to a scientific work and to have found no place therein. Still we can very well understand the position of the author in this regard, for it is our opinion that the patience of Job himself would have been sorely tried to have men who claim to be expert alienists, denying *in toto* some of the most fundamental truths of psychiatrical science. Hence, we suppose, the author seized the only opportunity which presented itself to show the deficient education of such men and thus established the fact that no weight should be attached to their teachings. That the author saw his mistake and corrected it is a matter for congratulation.

Other modifications consist in the adoption of the term "paranoia"

for monomania, and the addition of an appendix which is composed of a series of additions to the original text.

That the change of term was a wise one will be accepted, we think, by all, excepting a few controversialists who still cling to the belief that "monomania" and "paranoia" are not expressive of any definite mental aberration. But the fact that Mendel, of Berlin, adopted this substitution for the German "*Verrucktheit*" has led the author, as he says in the preface, to make the same adoption and for the same reasons.

The additions comprising the appendix either supply deficiencies in the original text or further elucidate the author's statements therein. The strongest and best timed of these is a very just criticism on oophorectomy as a means of curative procedure in mental disorders. It is high time, we think, that indiscriminate oophorectomies should cease and that gynaecologists should view the fact that, though they be good operators, they may not be good alienists; and should hence hesitate to operate, especially where such a great difference of opinion exists among alienists as to the curative effect of this operation on hysteria and insanity. In fact the great weight of opinion is against operation, for in the largest number of cases operated upon for these troubles no change occurred in the mental condition. The author well says "certainly those forms of insanity which, like primary paranoia and moral imbecility, are due to a neurotic taint and defect, should be regarded as a *noli me tangere* by the oophorectomist."

It is not often that we are called upon to pass criticism upon the publisher's portion of a work. In fact, works of small scientific value are often gotten up regardless of expense. We might expect that when a book of such intrinsic worth as the one under consideration was published, that the publisher would prepare and issue the typographical portion in uniformity with the value of the contents. But here our expectation was not realized. Indeed, not only the general appearance of the book is shabby, but the paper and character of the type seem to exhibit a most parsimonious and impecunious spirit on the part of the publisher. We would hence suggest to the author to seek another publisher when he issues his larger work on insanity which he promises, and to thus prevent a physician's library being disgraced by such binding which so demeans the present volume.

N. E. B.